

Common Problems With WESS Submissions

Free Text Blocks

In any narrative text block, such as event narrative, description of damage or causes in WESS, WESS-DS, or a message report, do not use personal information or the command's name. The "Involved Personnel" section is the only place in WESS to put a person's name. If it's an on-duty mishap, we recommend using the Sailor or Marine's watch station—for example OOD, EOOW or MOOW. If it's the injured person, you can use mishap victim (MV).

Event Narrative

The "Event Narrative" in WESS is one of the most important elements in mishap analysis and prevention. Naval Safety Center analysts need to know what led up to the mishap. The lessons learned and recommendations users come up with also are important pieces of information for other ships. Just stating that Sailors or Marines were reminded to be aware of hazards is giving lip service to operational risk management. This is an

opportunity to identify required training for your supervisors and division safety petty officers on hazard identification and assessment and to build a lessons learned file for future training. In almost all mishaps, there are lessons learned and corrective actions.

One of the biggest issues with on-line WESS, WESS-DS, and message submissions is in the "Mishap Narrative/Lessons Learned/Recommendations" block. Since the cancellation of message reports required by Chapter A6 of OPNAVINST 5100.19D and the attendant review by the ship's chain of command, the information in this block has deteriorated. In the old mishap report, section "Delta" of the message contained three subparagraphs: Chain of events, causes (now in a separate section of WESS), and recommendations and actions taken. Please use that same thought process—"chain of events" and "recommendations and actions taken"—when you fill in the "Mishap Narrative/Lessons Learned/Recommendations" block in any report you complete. ♦

Common Problems With WESS-DS Submissions

- 1 Dates for light/limited or lost days often are missing.
- 2 Ship's chain of command status. You need to know your Echelon 2 and Echelon 3. Most frequently, it's COMUSFLTFORCOM and your type commander. If you're deployed, it may be a numbered fleet commander.
- 3 The birthday/age for an injured person often is omitted.
- 4 Please be precise on the location of the injury. Talk to the ship's corpsman since, for example, a back injury must be identified by region and disc or cervical spine and disc, thoracic spine and disc, lumbar spine and disc, sacrum. Facial injuries should be specified as jaw, forehead, zygomatic arch, orbits, nasal, or other precise affected area.
- 5 WESS asks whether the lighting conditions were adequate at the time of the mishap and this information is often omitted. ♦